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The Hymns of the Church

by

Henry Harbaugh

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HIST

Our final question is about the quantity of the penult in the word *Κανδάκη*; and it is a question of practical interest, since a ship Candace is traversing the ocean. And on this question we must, first of all, hold fast the position that the original name is lost. It is certainly not Ethiopic; it occurs in the Abyssinian, but this, as Prof. Dillmann testifies, only proves that the Abyssinians knew the name which they took from the New Testament. They write it sometime Chendâkê, sometimes Chendeke, and again Chendeke: "just as foreign words are generally diversely spoken and written." "It cannot," says Dillmann, "be at all explained from the Ethiopic, or from the Semitic tongues." The same learned writer assures us, that the language of Meroë is lost. We may then well assume that the same is the case with the language of Nepata and the kingdom of Candace, which bordered on Meroë.

We are, then, in reference to the name *Καηδάκη*, restricted to the laws of quantity in the Greek language. These laws decidedly favor the view that the penult syllable is short.

Franz Passow, in his Doctrine of Quantity in the Greek Language, says: "1. *ακις*, contracted *ακι*, as the ending of the numeral adverbs, always has the *α* short, *e.g. τετράκις*, *πολλάκις*. The accent itself implies this, for else we must write *πολλἀκις*. 2. The adjective ending *ακος*, *ακη*, *ακον*, has short *α*: thus in *μαλακή*, *βιβλιακή*, *Σηριακή*." This alone, it seems to me, were enough to show that the word is to be spoken with the accent on the first syllable Yet we can also refer to the substantives *φυλακή*, *ἀκινακης*. The question would of course be decided by a line from the poets; but such an one I have not been able to find. For the verses from Tzetzes, cited above, are not to be read by the quantity but by the accent; and though *Κανδάκην* has there the tone in the penult, this is as little proof that *α* is long, as in the directly following *διαγράφειν*, where, too, the *α* of the penult, though short, has the tone. Accordingly one who reads the Greek by the accent, will say *Κανδάκη*, as he does *Πενελόπη*, *Σωκράτης*, *Ἀριστοτέλης*, that is, with a short, though accented penultimate. But in German [and English] whoever says Candâce, must also say Penelôpe, Socrâtes, Aristotêles.

The sum of our view, then, is this; that the queen Candace (mentioned in Acts viii. 27), 1. was so called as a proper name, as in the case of the Ptolemies, and not as a title, like Pharaoh; 2. That the name Candace, from the Latin forms, has the penult *a* short; 3. That the word *Κανδάκη* can not

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Art. VI.—THE HYMNS OF THE CHURCH.

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The Hymn, as a part of Christian Cultus, is properly a liturgical form. The Hymn Book, and—when prepared forms of prayer are used—the Liturgy are properly, not two, but one book. In any case, the hymns and prayers of the Church are coördinate in nature and character. As the prayer that flows from the heart and lips of the minister becomes the means and channel through which the worshipping congregation presents its own devout offerings to God, so the Hymn is in like manner prepared and used as the means of at once inspiring, embodying and helping to present their devotions before the throne of grace.

Thus the Hymn occupies an important place in the public service of God. Its use has been recognized as an acceptable part of divine worship, both in the Old Testament and the New; and it has endeared itself to the Christian mind, by the edification and comfort it has furnished, in all ages of the Church. All that pertains to the Hymns of the Church well deserves the attention and study of every pastor who desires rightly to conduct the public worship of the sanctuary.

Hymn-forms, like creed-forms, have a historical development. The peculiar formulas of Creeds, in which the Church presents its faith, as is well known from Church History, have assumed their true form and fixed use through a process. Every prominent word, and every phrase, has been borne as a standard through a more or less severe and protracted battle. It has been only after such a process, that creed-formulas have attained authoritative form. The same is true of the form and language of prayer. Whether extemporaneous or liturgical, there are words and phrases which are devotional,

and others which are not. Devout formulas have grown up gradually in the pious life of the Church, and have come to their present sacred honor and use in a historical or traditionary way. It will always be found that his prayers best suit and inspire the devotions of others, who has most extensively mastered and most deeply appropriated what has come down through the ages as the sacred and spiritually savored style and form of truly devotional thought and feeling. In like manner, and under the power of the same law, have hymn-forms, their history and development.

Sacred songs, in some form, for purposes of divine worship, are coeval with the history of religion. Forms of this kind, as first-fruits of the inspirations of piety, existed in the earliest ages of Judaism ; and the Jewish church gradually created for itself rich treasures of sacred song, which lie scattered as gems throughout the Old Testament, and are specially collected in the Book of Psalms.

In our Saviour's time, the Old Testament Psalms were used in public worship, whilst with the inauguration of Christianity, others were produced, more directly out of the spirit of the new economy. The supposition is very natural, that those precious hymns preserved in the gospel, the Hymn of the Virgin Mary, (St. Luke, i. 46–55.) the Hymn of Zacharias, (St. Luke, i. 68–79.) and the Hymn of Simeon, (St. Luke, ii. 29–32) may have been sung in our Saviour's immediate spiritual family. That they were preserved by them, seems evident from the fact that they were subsequently embodied in the Gospel.

Other hymnal compositions, besides the Old Testament Psalms and those preserved by St. Luke, were evidently preserved and used in the Apostolic Church. Fragments of these, at least, are supposed to be embodied in such passages as I Tim. iii, 18, II Tim. ii, 11, James i, 17, and especially Eph. v, 14, which passage—

> Awake, thou that sleepest,
> And arise from the dead.
> And Christ shall give thee light.

—is introduced by the words, "Wherefore he saith ;" and yet the passage is no quotation from any part of the Scriptures. Similar parts of primitive hymns are supposed to be found in Rev. i, 4–8 ; v, 9–14 ; xi. 15–19 ; xv, 3. sq; xxi, 1–8 ; xii, 10–17. 20. Besides, St. Paul directly refers to psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs as existing among the saints at Ephesus and Colosse, and exhorts them to use these for their mutual edification, (Eph. v, 19, Col. iii, 16.)

The Greek Church was first and most prominent in the production of regular hymns, as distinguished from inspired scriptural compositions. These were first in the form of doxologies and brief ascriptions of praise to Jesus Christ and the Holy Trinity. The nucleus of the *Gloria in Excelsis*, or Angelic Hymn, the most ancient and complete of hymns, and which attained its present final form in the fourth century, is also found at an earlier period. From the Greek Church we have also the *Te Deum*, which dates from the fifth century, afterwards by St. Ambrose translated into Latin, and somewhat enlarged.

The history of Latin hymnody begins in the fourth century. Quite a number of the Latin fathers of the mediæval church, whose names are theologically familiar, composed hymns :— as St. Ambrose †396 ; St. Hilary, of Poitiers, †368, who translated the Gloria in Excelsis into Latin, and to whom some ascribe the completion of it in its present form ; Prudentius †600 ; Notker †912 ; Bernard of Clairvaux, †1153 ; Thomas of Celano, about †1250, to whom the *Dies Iræ* is ascribed ; Bonaventura †1274 ; Thomas Aquinas †1274, and Benedictus †1306, with others less prominent. Many of their hymns came down to the later church, and have formed the basis of some of the very best hymns of the Reformation period, and since. Of the thirty-seven hymns written by Luther, there are only six purely new ; the rest were all based on psalms, Bible passages, or mediæval hymns.

The Reformation, as a vigorous outburst of the Christian life, gave a powerful impulse to hymn-writing. While the fifteen centuries before the Reformation produced not over one thousand hymns, the three hundred years since the Reformation have, in the German language alone, produced, according to Dr. Alt, about eighty thousand. Dr. Phelps sets down the number of English hymns at thirty thousand. Other languages also contain large numbers.

Rationalism, in Germany, and Naturalism, in England, did much, not only to corrupt the true hymnological taste, by producing a large number of merely didactic and moral hymns, but also by eviscerating many of the old anointed hymns of their truly Christian contents, and changing them so that they might chime in with their own specious infidelity. The pietistic movement, in Germany, and kindred movements in England, whilst they have produced some hymns of high inspiration, tended to turn the hymnological taste too much into a subjective and sentimental channel, having weakened the nerves of faith by unduly cultivating the mere devotional

nature, thus furnishing the people rather what they *wished* than what they *needed*. We venture the opinion that this is the radical defect which characterizes the hymns which the church, in our own country, has, during the last several decades, been producing in connexion with a certain peculiar style of popular music.

The vast amount of hymnological matter which the history of the church has accumulated, and the foreign element which has infused itself into a large portion of this class of compositions, has made the creation of a hymnological science necessary; so that by such tests as the true idea of Christianity and the true spirit of Christian worship furnish, the chaff may be separated from the wheat. It is the office of this science to sit in judgment on the products of the sacred poets; to examine the hymnological material scientifically, and to give it historical, critical and systematic presentation. The science, as a part of practical theology, is comparatively new, but has, in the last two decades, been earnestly and successfully furthered, especially by German divines, and it now stands in its place, in all German systems of practical theology, in the same way as homiletics, catechetics, liturgics, and poimenics or pastoral theology. Scientific hymnological inquiries received special impulse from Schleiermacher, who gave a deeper and wider foundation to the science of practical theology, which has caused the fact to be more deeply felt, that hymnody constitutes an essential part of the public worship of the sanctuary. Besides large collections of hymns, there have appeared histories of hymnody, biographies of the authors of hymns, as well as various attempts to form and perfect the science of hymnology.* In this last department none have rendered better service to the church than Lange and Palmer.

The subject of hymnology has during eight years attracted new and increased attention also in this country. Works which, though not designed to be scientific treatices on hymnology, are yet more or less related to the general subject, as that of Dr. Belcher's on the Authors of Hymns, "Hymns and Choirs" jointly by Prof's. Phelps and Park of Andover, and the Rev. Mr. Furber of Newton, have appeared as at once signs and preparatory labors in this interesting department. As an evidence of the general want that is felt to exist in the present hymnological status may also be

* See notices of these various works in Herzog's Real Encyclopedia Vol. VI. pp. 350 354.

mentioned the fact that almost all the prominent denominations in the land have lately published, or are present engaged in producing new hymn books. Not merely new collections, nor yet larger collections, are to be desired; rather collections smaller if need be, but made with a deeper knowledge of what constitutes the true nature of a hymn suitable for use in public worship.

This general want is itself beyond doubt the growth of a newly awakened interest, in the question as to what constitutes the true nature of worship. It begins to be more clearly seen, and more deeply felt, that Christian worship does not consist in mere sentiment, self-awakened and vaguely exercised by subjective endeavors, but rather in a steady, solemn self-surrender, and the offering of our whole being to the Triune God; that true Christian worship is not "will-worship," but a worship called forth by a gracious power exerted upon our faith by the true objects of Christian worship and love—God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, the Holy Ghost the Comforter; by the glorious facts of redemption—the birth, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and reigning of Jesus Christ; by the person and work of the Holy Ghost; and by the church, with its holy sacraments and motherly nurture. As the genial heavens above, and the gladdening earth around, call forth the springing of herbs, the bloom of flowers, and the songs of birds, so does this glorious, spiritual firmament of divine facts, acts, sacraments, ordinances, and gracious supernatural powers, over and around us in the church, evoke from faith the true form and spirit of worship. The earth is bright, warm, and wakeful when it is shone upon; in like manner is the Christian heart lively with the spirit of worship, when the divine and heavenly, as revealed in Christ, and still present in the Church, are in its cultus made present also to the consciousness of faith. To be apprehended by these, and to apprehend them in turn, and yield to their power, is to have the true position of a worshipper.

A re-discussion of the nature of Christian worship has led the mind of the church to a new interest in all that pertains to it, in all its elements and relations. Such discussion begins, of course, with the inward and central—as the person and work of Christ and the Spirit, the nature of the church, the sacraments and ordinances; but by logical necessity it must extend also to matters more outward, such as Christian architecture, church music, symbols of faith, liturgies, and hymn-books. Hence, all these subjects are at the present time receiving unusual attention, and especially that of hymnology.

Of the one thousand hymns produced by the church prior to the Reformation, it is reckoned, by critics, that not over one hundred and fifty can bear the test of the true hymn, and, in fact, only about that number have attained to classical honor. It is the expressed opinion of German hymnodists, that of the eighty thousand extant in their language, not over two hundred are classical, and have come into any kind of general approved use. Though there are in the English language thirty thousand hymns, a truly critical sifting of them would no doubt show that Prof. Edwards was correct when he gave it as his judgment that "two or three hundred of the most excellent songs of Zion, would include all our psalms and hymns which are of sterling value for the sanctuary." We fear that even this estimate is too high; for it must be remembered that not every poetical composition which has become a favorite with this or that Christian, can be regarded as a true hymn. Some particular circumstance, some event or experience may endear a particular hymn to one when it has no such attraction for another. Besides, individual taste can not be allowed to pronounce final judgment on a hymn; individual tastes may be very much at fault in regard to its true merits as a hymn, and it is the province of hymnological science to correct such taste—to bring the church to furnish to its members, not such hymns as may please their own natural private capricious fancies, but such as they ought to sing, and such as when properly led and instructed they will love.

What is a true hymn?

1. The hymn differs from some other sacred compositions. St. Paul mentions three kinds as suitable for devotional use—psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, or odes (ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς). Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16.

The psalm is a composition produced in the earlier stage of religious and scientific development, and in it, therefore, the free flow of religious feeling, in the determination of its form, prevails over the artistical. Psalms are historico-poetical; they celebrate divine acts, and rehearse sacred events connected with the gracious dealings of God with his people. They are historically objective in their character, allied to the epic. When they express the subjective pious sense of the author, it is mostly as this is awakened and enlivened and called forth into utterance by a grateful review of objective historical divine acts and events.

The hymn grows out of the subjective pious general consciousness to which its author as the organ of this consciousness, gives objective form and representation. If the psalm

celebrates what God has done, is doing, and still promises to do for his church and people, the hymn expresses what the church feels and experiences in consequence of such merciful love. The hymn, however, while it grows forth from the subjective pious consciousness, does not embody merely the subjectivity of the individaal author, but what it expresses is the consciousness of the church in its universal character. This gives the hymn at last a truly objective character, which constitutes the fundamental differencc between it and the spiritual song.

The spiritual song or ode, expresses the subjective feeling of the individual, and represents the individual consciousness of the author at the time, and in the particular mood and frame which controlled him in its composition; it is, therefore, adapted to other individuals in the same mood and frame. Spiritual songs are the hymnings of the heart in its own personal exercises, agreeably to its own peculiar tastes and experiences, and in its own hours of meditative devotion. They express privately and for the individual Christian's edification what cannot be presumed to be general in a public service of the church. If suitable at all beyond such individual use, it is only in small, familiar, confidential circles, where mutuality of feeling may be certainly taken for granted.

Though characteristically distinguished, as we have shown, these three kinds of sacred composition, are not in such way distinct and separated from cach other as to have nothing in common. They contain allied features, and the elements of one may enter more or less into and modify the others. Speaking of these three kinds of sacred lyrical compositions as having been in use in the apostolic church, according to Eph. v. 18, 19, Dr. Lange furnishes the following criticism on their unity and difference. "The psalms were the religious songs which had come down to them; hymns and odes, as to their form, were also at hand, but the Christian spirit was made to constitute their substance. The psalm may be regarded as a primitive form which comprehends in one, as well the substance of the hymn as of the ode. The psalm is a hymn, a festive song, a word of revelation, an oracle utterance, so far as it proclaims the divine teaching, the right, the truth, the praise of God, in the festive frame of one inspired; but it is an ode, a song, a rhythmical effusion of the heart, so far as the inspired one, in making his utterance, rocks on the waves of sound, balancing himself with winged skill. That the hymn expresses more the objective doctrine, the ode more the subjective of elevated feeling, in a poetical form, is clearly seen as well from the

etymology of both words, as from the forms of poetry indicated by them; and we must not suffer ourselves to be misled as to this distinction, by the cool spirit of some odes of Horace and Klopstock. The measured movement characterizes the more objective nature of the hymn; the winged form indicates the character of the ode—a beautiful melodious warble, which expresses itself in the life of metre. The psalm, as capable of including the ode and the hymn in its contents and its form, expresses the essence of both; at one time, however, it approaches more the measured nature of the hymn, at another more the variability of the ode. In the sphere of Hebrew life, the psalm did not come to unfold fully and purely both the elements which lay in it, because, with the Hebrews, the religious interest prevailed over the artistic; Christianity, on the other hand, entering the sphere of Grecian culture which had developed the form of the ode and the hymn, poured its festive spirit into both forms. Gradually, however, it brought the separated forms together again in a higher unity when it constructed the church-hymn. Thus the church-hymn is the psalm completed in the spirit of the New Testament, in which the hymn and the ode have again become one. The affinity of the church-hymn and the psalm is seen in the reigning of the religious principle; the difference between it and the psalm is seen in the fact that the religious principle has become one with the perfected æsthetical form. The hymn is known by the measured, solemn form of the verse, the ode by the variety and liveliness, the rhythmical and musical nature of its verse. Moreover, this unity had to be reached, because in Christianity the powers from above, do not, as Chrysostom asserts, form merely hymns, but also reveal themselves in psalm-songs, for as much as they become flesh like the eternal Word itself, and because the human powers, which indeed rise as on the wings of the ode, are illumined and tempered through the peace of the divine spirit. For a time these forms could stand in force side by side. Thus, in the speaking with tongues in the church at Jerusalem, the essence of the hymn was predominant; they spake of the wonderful works of God; they spake in a way intelligible to the people of various dialects. (Acts ii.) In Corinth, on the other hand, the form of the ode prevailed; the enthusiastic Christians spoke confusedly in soaring, dark effusions of feeling; they required interpreters; they were obscure to many of their own companions, to say nothing of strangers (Cor. xiv. 23); yea, this inspirited life in its degeneracy, seems to have approached the dithyrambus. Just as a didactic poem, whose

shortest form is the Gnome, may be regarded as the boundary of the hymn, so the dithyrambus is the boundary of the ode. In the hymn the subjective life is caught up into the serene ether of festive contemplation; the divine predominates; but then also in the didactic poem the human is entirely excluded, and by this means also the lyric life of the poem. In the ode, on the other hand, the divine life is drawn into the blessed, joyful emotional exercise of the feelings; the human predominates. In the dithyrambus, finally, man seeks violently to draw the divine into his own wild, sensuous inspiration; but the divine, agreeably to the holiness and power of its own nature, firmly refuses to be so drawn into a sphere foreign to itself. The pure church-hymn has excluded all that is dithyrambic through the light of the Spirit of God, and all that is gnomical through the lively affection of the human spirit; yea, it has abolished the antitheses of ode and hymn itself in the harmony of its divine-human nature and character, even though it belongs to the revelation of its richness, that in some single productions the character of the ode, in others, that of the hymn, should be more predominant!"

2. As regards its substance, the true hymn must be based on, and centre in the great FACTS of redemption—those namely, which constitute the basis of the Apostles' Creed—the love of God the Father, and His work in creation and redemption; the grace of Jesus Christ, as it appears in His birth, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, and reign in heaven; the communion of the Holy Ghost through his various offices in the church; and the communion of saints, the festive joys and hopes of the new life in Christ Jesus, as it is now and shall continue forever in the ineffable joys of heaven.

That the substance of the true hymn must be based on *facts*, not ideas merely, is illustrated by reference to an analogous case. What constitutes a national song? Not a description of patriotism. Not an ode on any great principle or policy of government. It must centre in some sacred *thing*: as "The Star-Spangled Banner;" "Rally Round the Flag;" "The Red, White and Blue." It must celebrate some *fact*, *event*, or *name*. Volumes of poetry of either character, fully equal to it, yea, exceeding it in merit as poetry, will never be married to music, or touch the chords of the national heart. How few, among all the lyrics of the present war for the Union, has the national heart accepted as the true exponents of its feelings, purposes, and hopes. Those which have touched the heart of the nation, and been accepted as the organs of its patriotic life, will all be found to be characterized by the marks of the true national song as indicated.

The same general criteria must be applied to the true hymn. It must be based on great and glorious facts and events, and set forth the perennial life which flows from them as the true life of all human hopes. Hence it must not so much describe such events and deeds—which is rather the province of the psalm—as reproduce them, and render them present in their life and spirit. It must incarnate them. It must make them live in the heart, as they once lived in the hearts of others, and are designed to live in all hearts whom they concern.

We know that the very earliest sacred writers characterized the first hymns of the church as being sung in honor of the Holy Trinity; and from them, as well as from pagan authors, we learn that they were accustomed to "sing hymns to Christ as to God." In a word, the central substance of all the most ancient hymns, inspired and uninspired, is Jesus Christ as the fundamental fact, and absolute principle and source of Christianity, and the Christian life. Of this character are the "Magnificat," the "Benedictus," the "Nunc Dimittis," the "Trisagion," the "Gloria in Excelsis," the "Te Deum," the "Dies Irae." As all the prophets before He appeared, gave witness of Him, so all the sacred hymnodists after him in the early church celebrated him. It needs but a careful examination of them, to assure any one that all the truly classic mediæval, and more modern German and English hymns, have the same peculiarity. The life of Jesus Christ is itself the song of songs, the hymn of hymns, the harmony of harmonies; and a church-song as designed to celebrate His life in a gracious and festive spirit, is great, and true, and glorious, only so far as His life is its spirit and light.

3. The true hymn must have unity—the unity, not of a mechanical structure, but of an organism—a unity in which the uniting power is one that acts from within—a unity in which the several parts are not produced as by the sequence of logical deduction, but grow forth according to the logic or laws of life. One thought or life must pervade all its parts. An aggregation of thoughts, however just, devout, and beautifully expressed, is not sufficient to constitute a true hymn. It must have a living oneness and wholeness—the inspiring, invigorating, illuminating life must be central and generic, which all the subordinate parts only serve to unfold, and, at the same time, still more fully to enliven.

Our present purpose does not contemplate a critical exam-

1. Die Kirchliche Hymnologie, von Dr. J. P. Lange, Zurich, 1843, pp. 29–31.

ination of particular hymns; but let any one, in the light of what has just been said, examine any of the earliest Christian hymns, as, for instance, the Magnificat, the Gloria in Excelsis, or the Te Deum, or even the most classic of modern hymns. What wonderful organisms! What intuitive logic of life will be found to underlie and pervade them! To the thoughtful mind they are themselves sufficient to furnish overwhelming evidence that Christianity, which is able to raise the human mind to the capacity of producing such transcendant creations, is fully and fairly supernatural and superhuman. The attempt of the merely natural mind to perfect such creations, would be precisely as preposterous and futile as it would be for an arborist to attempt the production of a tree! The unity of these grand Hymns of the Ages lies in no sense in that "which is in part," but in that sphere whence man himself, "trailing clouds of glory," originally came, in which forever rests the deepest basis of his true life, and into which, even before he leaves the present sphere of his being, the Christian spirit, in seasons of inspired ecstacy, in solemn hours, is caught up by the festive spirit and force of the Christian life.

The Christian poet does not produce a hymn by calm, meditative process. He does not construct it by adding thought to thought in perfectly self-conscious calmness, as a joiner or mason builds a house, by placing timber upon timber and stone on stone. He does not apprehend thought, but the Spirit that apprehends him lifts him up by His own inspiration, and wrests it from him by a kind of spiritual *coup de main*. Hence it has the unity, not of meditated logic, but of the apprehending force which called it forth. It has the unity given it by the one inspiring power. From such a hymn no part can ever be left out or seriously changed. The omission of a single stanza would be like the separation of an eye or an ear from the human body. Hymns compiled of stanzas, however smooth they may seem to an unpractised taste, will ever have the same fault as that Egyptian statuary, in the production of which the furnishing of each separate limb or member was a separate and special trade!

4. The true hymn must have high inspiration—what the Germans call *schwung*. It must have the uplifting, away-bearing power. As it can only be composed under the pressure of a pious enthusiasm, when the spirit of the sacred poet is apprehended by an inspiration beyond his ordinary state and frame, so the same inspiring spirit must inhere in it, live and breathe in it, producing again in those who use it the

same mood, state, and life, which characterized the spirit of its author. A true hymn has this power latent in itself, and communicates it whenever legitimately used. It may be difficult to say precisely in what this mysterious virtue consists. We know, however, that some hymns have it, while others, that seem to have equal merit as poetical compositions, are destitute of it. It would almost seem as if words had the power of embodying the very life of Christianity, with the additional capacity of communicating it perennially. Thus true hymns are always inspiring.

5. The true hymn is catholic. It is equally adapted to all ages, to all lands, to all languages, to all classes of Christians, to all acts of worship, to all periods of life—childhood, youth, middle-life, old age—and to all branches of the Christian church. Thus the Gloria in Excelsis, the Te Deum, the Dies Irae, suit alike in the Protestant, the Roman, and the Greek church. The Magnificat, the Benedictus, the Nunc Dimittis, though imbued with much of the truest and best Jewish life, are altogether Christian hymns. Classic hymns are sung by Calvinists and Arminians with equal delight. They speak the language of piety more than of creed. Though, as in truly liturgical forms of prayer, doctrine lies in their *nexus*, it lies there in the form of life—for consciousness more than for the mind's apprehension—and it appeals to faith rather than to knowledge. A hymn that can only appropriately be sung in one particular denomination of Christians, is not a true hymn. "In the hymn," Herder has correctly said, "must sound the language of an universal confession of *one* heart and one faith." Hence the true hymn finds its place in all hymn-books. The general consciousness of the church, by a sovereign law of its own catholic life, determines the true hymn, rejecting all that speak not in its universal language, and admitting all that do, as the plastic life of the plant refuses what is not suited to its nature, and appropriates only congenial elements. Hymns which have this catholic life take their places naturally and silently in the bosom of Christian love, and go on in their pious mission from land to land, and from age to age, gathering a still richer savor around themselves by time, and are loved the more because loved by so many and loved so long.

6. Thus, also, the true hymn never grows old, but has the freshness and vigor of perpetual youth. It is always new, because it has always the power to awaken new life, as well as to bear and sustain it. In its latent and life-giving power, we liken it to a noble vessel, the very sight of which, as it

lies calmly in port, gives us the sense of power and of the capacity of movement, but which only properly enlivens as it bears us out into the open sea, when the sails are lifted and filled, and the now almost living structure carries us onward as if it were all and we nothing, becoming, at the same time, more and more a thing of power and life, as well as of beauty and joy.

No truer test can be applied to a hymn. Does it get old? Does it weary? Does it ever seem common to us? Then it is not a true hymn. The truly classic always bears acquaintance; and it does this alike to all classes of minds and hearts. A classic painting, for instance, the child, the ignorant, and the amateur all admire. Those feel its power and beauty who cannot tell why. As a work of art it grows on us instead of becoming tiresome and common. It is just so in architecture. How brief is the pleasure that results from the contemplation of filigree work. How soon the taste tires of carved wreaths, vines, and flowers. As these are transient in their nature, so are they transient in taste. But who tires of the arch, the dome, the pillar, the column, the scroll, the alcove, the panel? These are classic forms. They do not grow old through the ages; and they please the boy even as they do the man, the ignorant as well as the most cultivated scientific taste. One may see more in them than another, but all alike see in them beauty, and feel their power. The same holds true of hymns. Witness the short-lived character of the hosts of subjective spasm-hymns that come vaporing and dancing along on the popular wave of a languid sentimentality. They are as nosegays, that intoxicate for a moment a feeble and sickly taste. They are generaly married to music as ephemeral as they are themselves. The church has at present a subtle and therefore formidable enemy in this superficial hymnodical and musical taste. Our Sunday schools are sorely afflicted by it, and it is entailing upon the young a deep and lasting injury. It is the same evil taste, which, in the days of Gregory, well-nigh profaned the entire Christian worships. Popular convivial tunes were introduced, and sang to parodied words with a galloping measure. In self-defence the Gregorian chant was introduced, and by its classic power the popular taste was gradually changed; and these rude hordes of "twaddling rhymes, set to frisking tunes" were lashed out of the temple of God. In the period of the Reformation the same tendency manifested itself.*

* The use of this class of hymns is regarded by some as justified by the authority of Scripture. (Eph. v. 19, Col. iii. 6.) This last passage, taken as it stands in our translation, would seem to designate mutual teaching and admo-

The evil was remedied by the triumph of the solid, solemn German chorals. The old trouble has in our time again appeared on the stage, and is jubilating through the land, treating the unstable taste to new variations in hymn and tune at every change of the moon. If no new remedies for this false taste can be discovered, perhaps those which were effective in other ages would still prove themselves adequate.

A correct hymnological taste, based on a true conception of Christian worship, must exclude from public use in worship all compositions that belong *prevailingly* to the following classes:

1. Mere doctrinal statement of truth, however correct. This belongs to catechism and confession.

2. Poetry directly didactic. This belongs to the pulpit, and to the catechetical and Bible class.*

3. Hymns in praise of virtues, graces, acts of worship, the Sabbath, Sunday schools, the Bible. Singing is worship, and we can no more worship these than we can worship saints or relics.

4. Mere descriptions of religious experiences, feelings, and emotions. These are to be awakened by worshipping God, not by singing to them, or of them.

5. Sentimental poems. These have their appropriate place in other circumstances and circles of social life.

6. Descriptions of particular sins, or classes of sinners. This belongs to the sermon.

7. Compositions addressed to sinners with the view of alarming, instructing, or exhorting them. This also belongs to the sermon. Singing to sinners! Why not rather to saints?

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nition as the proper purpose of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. But a different punctuation of the Greek gives the passage another sense. Conybeare and Howson, in the "Life and Epistles of St. Paul," adopting the punctuation of Tischendorf, render the passage thus: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom. Let your singing be of psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, sung in thanksgiving, with your heart unto God." In their comments on the corresponding passage, (Eph. v. 19,) where a similar punctuation is followed, the most satisfactory reasons for this rendering, based on the context and scope, are given. On Col. iii. 16. Prof. Clark says: "Through bad *pointing* this verse is not very intelligible; the several members should be distinguished thus: "Let the doctrine of Christ dwell richly among you; teaching and admonishing each other in all wisdom; singing, with grace in your hearts, unto the Lord, in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. This arrangement the original will not only bear, but it absolutely requires it." Thus, neither of these passages does in fact bear any witness against the test of the true hymn which we have presented. But without even resorting to this rendering of the passages in hand, it may be remarked, that Christians may mutually teach and admonish one another by the use of a hymn that is neither directly didactic nor hortatory, even as they may do the same by devoutly offering together the Lord's Prayer, which is wholly devotional, and which becomes edifying in the way of teaching and hortation only indirectly.

* See Dr. Alt, Der Christliche Cultus, pp. 443 444.

8. Compositions expressive of morbid feelings, of doubt, despondency, discouragement, and "sorrow of the world." This is not a penitential exercise, neither does it awaken that sense. It is nothing but a sinful feeling of unbelief.

9. Compositions telling what we have done, are doing, or intend to do. This, if it does not actually fall into the sphere of vain boasting and bravado, belongs to the sphere of confession or profession, and is appropriate in another place.

10. Compositions for self-examination. Turning the thoughts on one's self is not worship, but only a preparation for it. The helps to self-examination are properly furnished by the sermon, or are found in manuals of devotion for Christians, the use of which belongs to the retirement of the closet.

11. Compositions so directly and formally referring to, and descriptive of, special occasions as to turn the mind more to the occasion and the circumstances, than to the true object of worship. This is a defect which characterizes by far the largest number of hymns intended for anniversaries, national holidays, meetings of reform societies, and occasional celebrations of various kinds.

It is because a degenerate taste has failed to apply the true tests to the hymn, that our hymn books are overburdened with compositions that are never sung. Let any one take only the tests which we have given, and honestly classify under them the contents of our hymn books, and he will be surprised to find how small a number is left. Indeed this is virtually done, though in an unconscious way, by those whose duty it is to select hymns to be sung in assemblies for public worship. To test the truth of this remark, let any pastor who has at all cultivated a hymnological taste, mark all the hymns which he uses any one year, and he will find at the end of the year that not one hundred, perhaps not fifty are marked as having been used. He will discover that the same hymn has been sung many times: and that an unconscious criticism, an instinct of good pious taste, has silently ignored the large mass contained in the book as not adapted to the purposes of public worship. Yet this vast amount of mere poetry—it is often not even that—is carried along in our hymn books, the closing one being numbered somewhere between one and two thousand! We doubt much whether two hundred hymns, worthy of that name, and truly adapted to the uses of public worship, can be found in the English language, or in any, or in all languages on earth. Sure we are that the pious taste of Christians generally does not in fact recognize even that number, by feeling itself truly at home in the devotional use of them. Where is

the Christian, the congregation, or even the denomination, that has two hundred of what are generally called *favorite* hymns? There are few universal favorites, because there are few that truly satisfy the universal Christian consciousness. The rest that make up the hundreds in our hymn books are poems, of more or less merit, put into their places under the erroneous idea that there must be hymns "adapted to *subjects*," instead of being adapted to the *worship* of God. Hence, the table of contents of our hymn books would generally answer just as well as a table of contents for a system of theology; and were it not that a hundred or more true hymns, the favorites of the ages, are scattered through the book, it would answer in fact as a scientifically arranged theological system in verse.

In our hymn books for children and youths, as used in Sunday schools, the tests of the true hymn are still more frequently disregarded, under the erroneous idea that by such means a more *practical* influence may be exerted. The didactic, hortatory, biographical, and eulogistic features prevail in these collections. All manner of lessons are taught, all manner of motives are presented to the child; forgetting altogether that in the spirit of a child, as also in the devotional spirit of the adult Christian, the heart and not the intellect prevails. The ruling idea in these collections seems to be to secure what is called *adaptation*—not, however, adaptation of the hymn to the true idea of the worship of God, but adaptation of the hymn to the child. The hymn is to effect something for the child—to instruct it, warn it; in short, in its influence and use it is to terminate on the child rather than to be the help and channel of its devotions offered unto God.

The same mistaken zeal for practical adaptation, is also responsible for the fact that so large a number of hymns for children are child*ish* instead of child*like*. True piety is childlike. Hymns that express faith, hope, love—directing the whole heart and mind toward the great atonement and mediation of Christ—when clothed in simple, chaste, and tasteful language, are much better adapted to the childlike than any puerile attempts to address the mind of the child by the use of words and phrases, in which the sublime is so easily made ridiculous, and the solemn comes uncomfortably near the ludicrous.

Hymns for children are never adapted to their true needs, when they are such as they must outgrow. The true hymn for a child must be in spirit and contents as suitable for the future adult as to the present child. By this it is not denied that nursery rhymes have their mission; but as they have their

use so they have also their appropriate place. The childish the child will outgrow, but the childlike it ought never to leave behind. The associations of childhood with the true hymn, give a savor and a power to it in after-life which it can have in no other way. Why give the children hymns to be interwoven with their memories and sacred associations, which in later life they must regard in the same light, as they then do their toys—the mere fossils of a period forever left behind? The hymns which they learn to love in childhood ought to be the same as those which shall best express their devotions amid the buoyancy of youth, the earnestness of middle life, and the decline of old age,

There is such a thing as the heart of a child apprehending, and being apprehended, by a hymn which its mind may not fully comprehend; like as a seed finds the soil adapted to all its infant needs, even though it has not yet tested, and can not now appropriate all the powers that lie in that same soil for use. We are fully convinced that those are the best hymns for children which have the highest unction of devotion, and the least of puerile adaptation to the mere intellect of the child; and it is by no means necessary that hymns, to be suitable to their wants, should be on a level with their understandings. Were this a necessity, could we regard the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, the Decalogue, as adapted to children, and could it be regarded proper to induce them to commit them to memory in early life? Yea, is not the Bible, the very best book for children, full of mysteries and truths that lie fairly beyond their early capacities? Does not also common observation teach us a lesson on this point? Let it be noticed whether children from eight to twelve years old are not most fond of those classic hymns which move in a high inspiration —which are not only far removed in their contents, spirit, and language from the simplicity of nursery rhymes, but which are even lofty in their style, and full of sublime adoration, awakened by the deepest mysteries of faith. Spiritually, even as naturally, children love the sublime, and stand gazing entranced into a flood of glory, without ever asking themselves whether they understand it. The unction carries them with it; and the impression made lies in the heart, like the seed in the soil, to be revealed in due time.

Let the question be earnestly considered, whether great and lasting injury is not done to children by excluding from their hymn books the lofty hymns of the church, and giving them instead, the tame, simple, didactic rhymes—lessons in verse —which are so generally found to constitute the main body of

Sunday-school hymn books. We would yet add, why not, also, with the better hymns, give them also the better tunes? Why is the chant excluded so generally from books for children, in favor of a shallow, ephemeral, and rollicking kind of music? We speak from experience, and actual trial in what we are about to say. Children love chants wherever they are taught to sing them, and they learn them most readily. They afford room for the free, wild warblings of childhood; and yet they maintain the dignity and solemnity which belong to divine worship. Whoever has had much to do with the instruction of children knows how fondly they catch up the galloping glee tunes adapted—sometimes literally *adapted*—from the convivial and sentimental song-airs, with frolicking choruses attached. There is in children a fondness for tunes of free and lively movement; they want the chant, and when this is not furnished them, they will catch up those frivolous airs referred to, and thus gradually lose all taste for the graver and more solid and solemn metrical tunes. When the chant is offered, they love it; and when learned, they need never unlearn it; since the chant, as it is admirably suited to the free, joyous simplicity of childhood's taste, so also is it adequate to give expression to the loftiest and sublimest worship to which the ripest tastes of adult age can attain.

Art. VII.—SCHELLING ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIFFERENT CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

[Schelling's general outline of the characteristics of the main branches of the Christian Church is well known. He compared the Church of Rome to Peter; the Church of the Reformation to Paul; while the Church of the Future was to be animated by the spirit of John. In *Der Gedanke*, (The Thought,) 1864, a philosophical periodical representing the Hegelian school, there is a report of an interesting discussion, occasioned by an account which Professor Leopold Von Henning gave of an interview he had with Schelling on this subject. Some striking points of view, for forming a philosophical estimate of the different periods and characteristics of church history are brought forward in this discussion, which was held at a session of the Philosophical Society at Berlin; several members, representing different tendencies, taking

part in the debate. Professor Von Henning has taught philosophy for a long time at Berlin. He was born in Gotha, Oct. 4, 1791. In 1824 he published a work on the Principles of Ethics in their Historical Development. He edited the Berlin Annals for Scientific Criticism from 1827 to 1844. He also edited Hegel's Lectures in the first part of his Encyclopedia, comprising logic. He belongs to the right wing of the Hegelian school. Professor Michelet is the president of the above-named Philosophical Society. He was born in Berlin, Dec. 4, 1801, and is the most zealous representative of the extreme *left side* of the Hegelians, carrying pantheism to its extremes. He is also one of the most prolific writers of the school; the author of the History of Philosophy in Germany, from Kant to Hegel, two vols. 1838; Schelling and Hegel, 1839–1842; Psychology, 1840; of several works on Aristotle's Ethics; of a General History from 1775 to 1859, etc. Another of the speakers in this discussion, Max Schasler, is a private teacher at Berlin, and editor of the *Dioscuren*, a journal devoted to æsthetic subjects. Eds.]

Von Henning. Some months since, in giving a short account to this Society of the new collected edition of Schelling's works, I alluded to the fact that he had often been reproached for the abrupt way in which he set aside all objections to his doctrines, and remarked that, so far as my personal intercourse was concerned, this reproach was without foundation. To illustrate this, I mentioned a conversation which I had with Schelling about his speculations on the different characteristics of the leading branches of the church; and now, in compliance with the desire then expressed, I am happy to give a fuller account of the substance of that conversation.

Let me remind you that Schelling, in his Lectures on the Philosophy of Revelation, represents Christianity as the union and the truth of Judaism and heathenism (and this, rightly understood, with good reason); and then, within Christianity, he makes a broad distinction only between the Catholic and the Evangelical confessions; the former, with Peter at the head, he considers as representing the Jewish principle; and the latter, with Paul at the head, as representing the heathen principle in the Christian church. [The word *heathen* is here used, not in reference to the religions of the Gentile nations, but in a general, historical sense.] I would also call to mind, that our philosopher speaks of another, a third Christian church, which he names the Church of the Future, and at whose head he puts the apostle John.

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